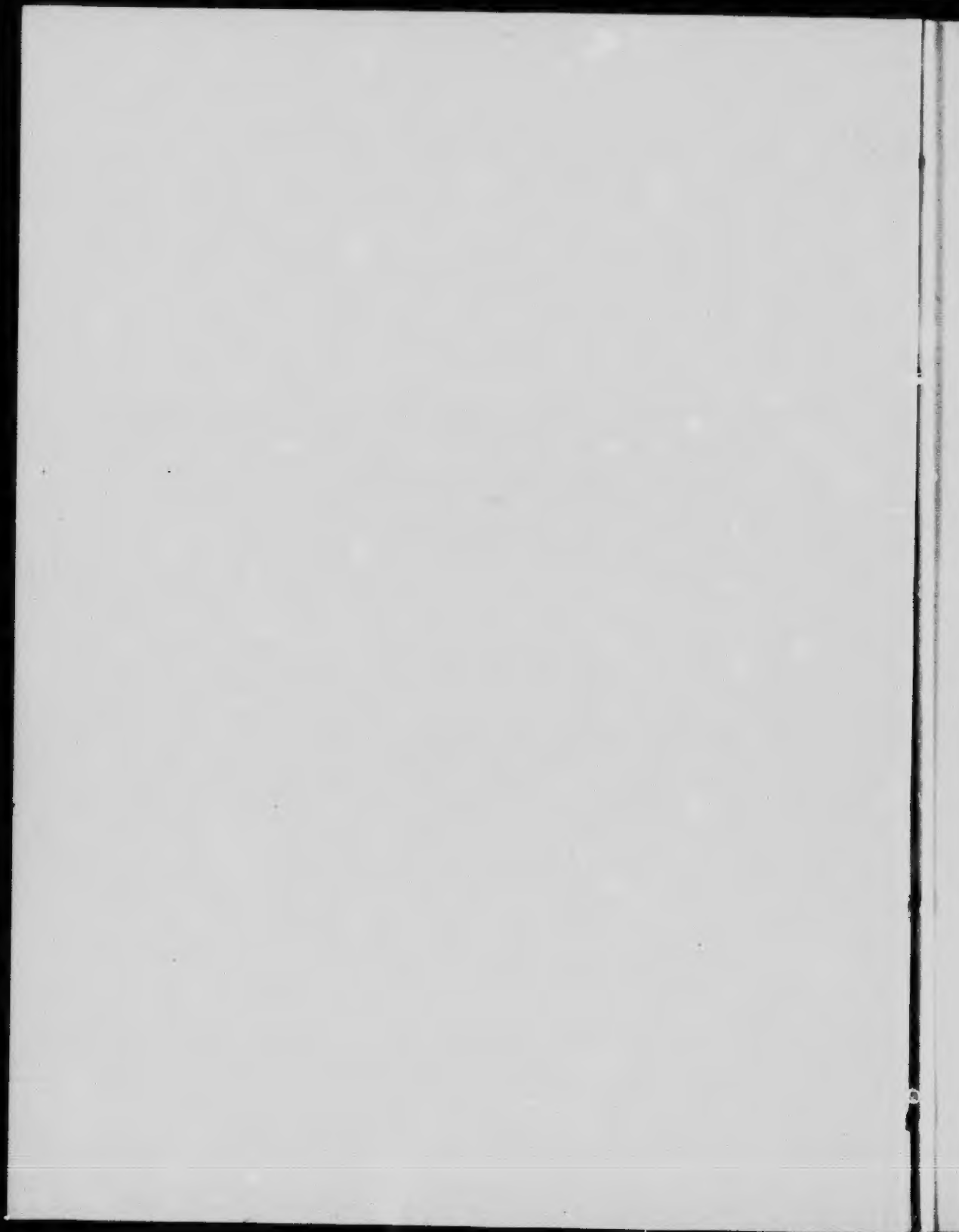


Immanuel
GOD WITH US



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**BY
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FOREWORD

One of the most alarming heretical tendencies of the day is the denial of the deity of Christ, which, although coming down from the fourth century, and more or less in evidence during the middle ages, has never wrought the same devastation as during the past and present centuries, not only in the most unqualified rejection of a cardinal foundation of Christianity, but in the attenuation of the faith of many Christians as to the Christ of God, whose majesty and greatness they fail to apprehend. There is also another and most serious attack upon the person of Christ in a practical denial of His humanity through the insidious relegation of His birth to some previous indefinite period than that which is clearly indicated in Scripture.

God only can keep us in these dangerous days.

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IMMANUEL

GOD WITH US.

I.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void.”

In this brief cosmic statement is contained all that God has been pleased to communicate to us as to the period when the universe of which this planet forms a part, was created. This, however, we know, that it was not the transformation of existing matter, not even atomic, but that the things which are were not made from those which do appear. It was a creation. No doubt the operation of natural laws has wrought many and important changes in th's world, and that the cataclysm which brought desolation prior to the Adamic creation may have been preceded by others, as we know from Scripture that the present scene of activity will

come to a sudden and complete termination by fire, in preparation for a final and permanent condition of things, so far exceeding the present that this will not be remembered or brought into mind. Thus God's purposes which are in evolution, will, when completed, present a perfection beyond the apprehension of the human mind in its now limited powers.

The finite mind cannot conceive infinity. When we read that God spake, and this, to us illimitable universe, stood forth, how little realization there is of what is involved. Even the complex working of laws then given for the perpetuation of creation. Philosophers are continually making discoveries in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth, some of which completely traverse views long held and strenuously maintained, and upon which were built elaborate superstructures, and these come to the ground when there is nothing for them to rest upon; but the word of God remains in all its sublime and unapproachable grandeur, an im-

movable rock, an invulnerable fortress, which Satan has been attacking for three thousand years only to confirm the Scripture which says "We can do nothing against the truth but for the truth."

When the Lord went into the synagogue at Nazareth and the roll of parchment was handed Him, He read a prophecy concerning Himself, and said: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," but He did not read the final clause of the prophecy, nor has it been since fulfilled; it is still impending. So also the inspired writer has left room in the first verse of Genesis for three hundred or more millions of years between the first and second clause of that verse; what, however, we are assured of by Isaiah is that "He created it not in vain (void)."

The organic remains which have come down to us from a prime creation indicate a very low order of animal life, with subsequent developments as period succeeded period in prehistoric creation, until finally man was brought upon the scene — a triune

being, made in the image of God and His supreme workmanship.

All the purposes and counsels of God find their culmination in this unique being, for at their head stands His beloved Son, who having been born under creature conditions remains a man in a glorified state forever. It is fitting, then, that the education and surroundings during the process of that education, of His prospective companions in glory should be of such a character as to perfectly accomplish the end to be attained, as fitting them therefor.

As to angelic creation, there was one being excelling all others; endowed with wisdom and beauty, he was indeed the super-angel, but the wonderful combination of mental and moral qualities led to his undoing. He saw no one greater than himself, nor indeed his equal, since God essentially dwells in an unapproachable light, and thus pride was generated, being manifested in an assumption of supreme authority. He was cast down and became from thenceforth the em-

bodiment of every evil principle. Since that period God has allowed him to test the reality of every created intelligence; the result is that one-third of the heavenly beings and an innumerable number of human beings have joined his standard and have become his emissaries.

This apparent digression has seemed necessary in order to present God's avowed purposes as to man insofar as they have been revealed to us by His holy scriptures. It was, then, His intent before this world came into existence that in the fulness of time He should manifest Himself in human form that He might be seen by His intelligent creatures, and not only so, but of those to whom He would thus be revealed there should be a company who would be partakers of His nature, indwelt by his Spirit, and to be for all eternity His confidential and trusted companions, and the medium through which His behests should be accomplished. In connection with this vast plan it was incumbent that those who were to occupy such an exceptional place of nearness

must be, not only immaculate, but have a knowledge of evil without which they would be incompetent judges. How was this apparently insuperable obstacle to be overcome? It could only have been by infinite wisdom. The first man was allowed to obtain this knowledge through disobedience in yielding to the temptation of the arch-enemy, and with it he was given a conscience. The next great step was provision for the recovery of this fallen creature whose debased nature now yielded readily to further assaults. How was this to be accomplished since God was absolutely holy, and every sin must be atoned for, as He requireth that which is past? Man could not recover himself and God could not lower His righteous claims. How was it possible that righteousness and peace could meet together? It was apparently impossible; yet again infinite wisdom could find a way, and infinite love could put it into execution; a way which only God could have devised; and that was by His bringing into the world His Son as man, and as man making atonement by the sacrifice of Himself for the sins his creatures

had committed, with the provision that identification by faith with Him in that sacrifice would secure the believer indemnity from deserved punishment.

Returning now to the first proposition: It is abundantly evident that there has been a Creator and a creation; furthermore, that this creation became chaotic, and Scripture informs us of the work of recovery and reconstruction of a submerged world in the space of seven days; literally so, for they are made up each, of morning and evening; but as the word of God is inexhaustible, we look again to see if there is another significance beyond that which is historical, and we see not only the recovery of a ruined physical creation, but also of that which is moral. Man had been made upright, but sin having come in, that moral creation became without form and void, utterly chaotic, with nothing where the moral darkness of unbelief is broken into by the action of the Holy Spirit, with the result that there is light. The one who is dead in trespasses and sins has no conception of anything above the firmament,

but light having come in, the darkness is made manifest, and the exercised soul is answering or responding to that which had come from the hand of God. But over this darkness the Spirit of God was moving, and God said, Let there be light, and there was light. How strikingly all this is in accord with the third chapter of John's Gospel, given to see the contrast between the night of unbelief with its darkness, and the light which the Spirit of God can cast upon a scene which is but a waste of waters; but by divine operation the dry land is made to appear and a basis is laid upon which the fruits and flowers generated in the human soul by the fructifying influence of a divine occupant is possible. The overflowing and destructive waters of unbelief are restrained, but not destroyed, and the element in which it finds its habitat is controllable; thus, although the Christian has an inherited nature that is not subject to the law of God, he has with it a power of control which he is responsible to exercise. How blessed the assurance that in the renewed earth "there shall be no more sea." Nevermore a dividing

element, which, like the wicked, casts up mire and dirt. Thus as we survey God's wondrous ways in the past; as we contemplate His present operations; or, as looking down the interminable vista of the future, as revealed to us, we are overwhelmed with a sense of the wisdom of God, so profound, so unsearchable, that we can only prostrate ourselves before infinite love, infinite wisdom, and infinite power, as we give expression to the rapturous acclaims of heavenly beings who are saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, which is, and which is to come."

II.

"Hear, O Israel: Jehovah thy God is one Jehovah."

The plurality of Gods in ancient days, indicating man's moral position, finds its counterpart at the present time in the great number of cults which have come into existence, the enemy having cleverly provided a religion and a form of Deity to meet every phase of unbelief which the natural mind of man finds in agreement with that unbelief. With some God is no more than the impersonation of goodness; while to others God is a reality but a distant one, taking no active part in the affairs of men, but having created man He leaves him to his own devices. As an adjunct to this form of unbelief a heartless formal acknowledgment is provided which has no value in bringing a soul into relationship with God nor of ministering to the various spiritual needs of souls in that rela-

tionship. Within these extremes is found the God of the Bible, a real living entity, whose love for the world has been manifested in His provision for the redemption of a ruined race and in His exaltation of those who accept the divine provision to a place in His wise and beneficent economy, from which, in all the endless ages of eternity they will never be deposed.

In numberless ways, and continuously from creation, God has been indicating His purpose of making Himself known to His creature man when the fulness of time had come. There were, indeed, angelic and other presentations, and providentially God was ever acting, through the elements or by animate creation, and the consciousness of this led to the faith which enabled a Job to say, "Now mine eye seeth Thee"; an Abraham to the heart-breaking sacrifice of his only son; a Moses to the leading of a multitude of people into a desert where there was no sustenance; a David to the celebration of the praises of Jehovah in fervid poetical imagery; and so as to many others.

All this, however, was anticipative, and the eternal God whom no eye had seen was in due time manifested in human form, and not only seen of angels, but justified by the Spirit. How profound, how incomprehensible, and yet the record so simple that a child may understand it.

Our precious Saviour said to one of His followers: "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Shew us the Father?" It may be said that there are "three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one"; but this verse is not in the original, and its spurious character is apparent when we remember that there is no need of a record in heaven, and that the Holy Spirit speaks of the Father and the Son, not of the Father and the Word.

In the year that King Uzziah died, Jehovah was seen sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple,

"and one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory." This could only have been said of God, but John in speaking of the Lord Jesus in his gospel says, "These things said Isaiah, when he saw His glory and spake of Him."

One in angelic character appeared to Manoah and his wife, to whom Manoah said: "What is thy name?" The angel replied: "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is wonderful?" (margin). Many years later Isaiah wrote: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, . . . and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." This child that was to be born could be none other than the babe of Bethlehem's stable — that one who is portrayed as an infant in the arms of its mother, yet the Son of God. Every personal manifestation of God in the Old Testament whether as the God of Israel, whether in angelic character, or whether as a man, was Jehovah then, Jesus now God

is essentially beyond human apprehension, the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father He hath declared Him, and this declaration is by "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting." "No man knoweth the Son but the Father," and yet, if there is any subject in the bible which man in his blind fatuity thinks himself capable of elucidating, it is the Person of the Christ. Books have been written about Him, but with many of these He is but man, and although in some instances acknowledged as Son of God, yet either definitely or by implication His existence is limited. Again it is said that a time is coming when the Lord will take His place as a man among men, and Himself be subject to God. This is merely another phase of the Satanic doctrine advanced by Arius. The scripture which is supposed to sustain this theory reads: "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even

the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

In the insignia of royalty which the crown, the sceptre and the throne present, there is a manifest indication of an element which has to be repressed, and this repression will continue till the close of the millenium, for during that period righteousness reigns — in the eternal state righteousness dwells, reigning is over forever, and the insignia of royalty disappears. The King of kings and Lord of lords ceases to be such, but He never ceases to be God over all blessed forever.

Thus it is apparent that there is a master mind directing all these attacks upon the Son of God, not only in the direct denial of any such relationship, but also in a partial denial and a partial admission of the glory of our Lord and Saviour. One heretical sect advertises His divinity, but every Christian is a partaker of the divine nature, and in any case the admission is nullified by a denial of His deity. He is the Son of God, He is the Everlasting Father. It is doubtless unnecessary to press this integral truth upon Christians who have reached the stage of a realization of relationship, but there are many, very many indeed, who are in much the same position as the Israelites in Egypt, not having been delivered, but in the purpose of God on the way thitherward, with no assurance until the Red Sea had been crossed and the waters returning to their normal condition, overwhelmed their enemies. To such it is most important that the Saviour should be rightly presented and correctly estimated, so that not a shadow of doubt as to His status should come over the mind and obscure the apprehension of the weakest traveller on the

narrow road. If indeed the Lord Jesus is not all He claims to be He is nothing, and trust in Him would be vain! Ah! He is all and more than all that the most advanced saint can grasp: "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." It is indeed a profound mystery, and it is not essential to salvation that there should be an understanding of it, for in that case none could be saved, but there must be a belief that the Man who died upon the cross was able to make restitution. Faith takes hold of the divine proposition that "He Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree." No man who was only that could bear so great a load, but those who are saved are conscious that the burden of sins has been removed, as well as that the nature which committed these sins has been judged of God in the person of His Son. Where now is the man Christ Jesus who died for sinners? "He has been raised from the dead by the glory of the Father." "Destroy this

temple and I will raise it again in three days," and lastly He has been "Quickened by the Spirit," and having been raised from the dead, this Man now glorified is on the throne of God, soon to come forth for the deliverance and translation of His own and to be manifested as God over all blessed forever.

III.

"I beheld until the thrones were set up and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool: His throne was like the
ry flame. . . . and I beheld one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given unto Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve Him."

In order that the human mind may more fully apprehend God in His various actings in relation to His creature man, He is presented under various similitudes, and each in perfect keeping with the position taken. There can be no question in any mind as to who the Son of Man is in the above quotation. But what as to the Ancient of days? John, in the Apocalypse, gives us a description of One like unto the Son of Man who walked among the candlesticks: "His head

and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters." Have we not reason for the assertion that the Ancient of days in Daniel is the Son of Man? The worlds were created in the distant past, and who this Creator was other scriptures plainly indicate.

"His throne was like the fiery flame." There seems to be but little realization of the basis of the throne of God even among many of those who have the assurance of salvation. The foundation of that throne has been laid in holiness and righteousness. God is absolutely holy and He dwells in an unapproachable light. There is not the slightest allowance for sin; not the slightest abatement of His holy claims — there is not an offence, either great or small, that God ever winked at, as our faulty translation declares; nor are there any sins of so trivial a character that God is indifferent to them. Holiness becometh His house forever, and His righteous judgments proceeding therefrom

are inflexible. How is it then, reader, that your sins, my sins, have not called forth a deserved and destructive judgment? Our God has found a Man, mighty to save, who, coming into the breach and baring his sacred bosom to the impending judgment bolt, has gone down under the awful infliction, and those for whom the bolt had been forged have escaped. How grand! How sublime! Eternity will not exhaust the wonder inspired by the contemplation of such an amazing interposition and in that radiant glory our deepest joy will be to speak to our adorable Saviour of the decease which He accomplished at Jerusalem.

“And His wheels as burning fire.” For a fuller understanding of this scripture the reader is referred to Ezekiel, and there the wheels are identified with the living creatures, and these again present divine operations in providence. The rings were in height illimitable, beyond, indeed, human apprehension, and convey to us the thought that God’s purposes are endless as well as inscrutable. There is no uncertainty or

variation; they go direct and with rapidity to their objective, and ever with the accompaniment of the living creatures through whom God is acting; and furthermore, the major operations are not at variance with the minor ones for the wheels within wheels, although engaged with details, are in an amazing way working them out incidentally to the accomplishment of the greater design. The finite mind becomes completely shrivelled into nothingness, in the presence of infinity, so that we may indeed say, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" and yet God's Son was a man in this world, and in every moral quality and attribute infinite, and God's Son is the Christian's Saviour, now occupied in the recovery of the lost, and when recovered passing them through a preparatory course in order to fit them for companionship with Himself throughout eternity. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God."

A day is approaching when all will know the Lord; when righteousness shall cover the

earth as the waters cover the sea; when He shall reign before His ancients gloriously; when a moral state will ensue among those happy earthly dwellers; when "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat." Alas! now the reverse of this happy communion is too often seen, when there is the biting and devouring one another.

"Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him." How amazing the contrast between all this and the scene in Pilate's court. We know but little of angelic beings. We know, however, that they are innumerable, and endowed with mental powers of a very high order, varying in capacity and in rank; but all of these are called upon to worship God's beloved Son when brought into the world. No angelic being has been taken into union with God; man only has been exalted to such a place, and angelic hosts first saw their Creator in the person of the infant born in time, and at Bethlehem.

O that we might see some approach, in this world, to a state of soul capable of apprehending somewhat of the glory once veiled for a brief period under human similitude, and accord to Him all the homage, all the adoration that in our obscurity we are capable of.

“The judgment was set, and the books were opened.” In these terse sentences the Spirit of God has brought before us a scene awful to contemplate; one, indeed, which should strike terror into the boldest heart of unregenerate mankind, inasmuch as that great assize is the final oyer and terminer of the human race, and from its decisions there are no appeals. What an agony of remorse, that undying worm, will ever cleave to the one who, knowing the holy requirements of God was indifferent to them. The judge upon that throne is the one who, centuries before, was a prisoner in a Roman court. There it was a mockery of justice, and the result a judicial murder; here, how different — the books are opened and the minutest record of rebellious lives will be found in un-

questionable evidence. But, more; another book is opened, which is the book of life, and the condemned may search in vain for a name once known in the world, and perhaps religiously, only to find that what was thought to be Christianity was but altruism.

It will also be found that not only was there no true thought of Christianity, but no right thought of sin. God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and there can be no allowance for sin. There can be no enumeration of what may be accounted sins, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin and indeed it is an underlying evil principle.

“Then the angel that talked with me went forth and said unto me: Lift up now thine eyes and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said: What is it? And he said: This is an ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover: This is their resemblance through all the earth. And behold there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah. And he said: This is wickedness. And he cast it into the

midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and behold there came out two women, and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me: Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me: To build it an house in the land of Shinar; and it shall be established and set there upon her own base."

All the idolatrous cults of post-diluvial times had their origin in the land of Shinar, and these find their concentrated embodiment in the mystic Babylon of the present day; but God has taken exact measurement of it, and soon it will be seen that the great system which is all about us, is not divine but of the basest metal, and although taking the name of Christ, it is but as a very thin veneer which He will soon strip off, and make evident that the worship of Madonna in no way differs from the worship of Vesta.

IV.

“And Moses said unto God, behold, when I come unto the Children of Israel, and shall say unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you: and they shall say to me, What is His name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, *I am what I am*: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, *I am* hath sent me unto you.”

How very comprehensive this brief name is. Enfolded in it is the expression of what God is essentially. He has taken many names to indicate the relationships He has been in with those He has owned upon the earth. To Israel it has been Jehovah Jireh; Jehovah Nissi; Jehovah-Shalom; Jehovah-Shammah; Jehovah-Tsidkenu; to Abraham He was the Mighty God, the Most High God; to the Church He is the Father, and each of these names has a special significance con-

nected with the circumstances of its declaration.

When Abraham was told of God to offer up his son as a sacrifice — a common practice among the heathen — he obeyed, although this was the child of promise; his faith in his God being so great that he believed the one in whom his earthly hopes were centred would be raised from the dead, but the uplifted hand was stayed and a ram was substituted for the son; a foreshadowing of the great sacrifice later when there would be no interposition. Is it not eminently fitting that Abraham should have said, *Jehovah-Jireh*, the Lord will provide.

More than four hundred years later, Amalek came and fought against the delivered people of Jehovah at Rephidim. The Israelites prevailed when the hands of Moses were raised, but human endurance has its limit; and his tired hands had to be upheld by Aaron and Hur. Our Leader, of whom this was a type, being ever in priesthood, and purity never grows weary, but is able to save to the uttermost; and in our unequal combat

with the powers of darkness, He ever sustains. Blessed and precious Saviour. We now, as Moses then, may surely say: Jehovah-Nissi — the Lord is my banner.

When God called Gideon from his threshing floor to deliver his people from the Midianites, and in support of the weak faith of His servant He performed the miracle of burning the flesh and unleavened cake which He touched with the tip of the staff which He held in His hand, Gideon was strengthened in faith and exclaimed: Jehovah-Shalom — the Lord send peace. And when we now, as after manifesting the same weakness of faith, call to remembrance the consuming fires of God's righteous judgment which have burned themselves out on a holy victim, so that now in the very place of judgment the sparrow hath found an house and the swallow a nest, we too know that blessed perfect peace and rest of soul although worthless and restless creatures.

In the interesting picture Ezekiel gives of the millennial period there are the twelve

gates of Jerusalem presented, each gate bearing the name of one of the tribes of Israel and then it will be that the city shall be called Jehovah-Shammah — the Lord is there. When that great city, the new and holy Jerusalem, descends out of heaven from God, the names of the twelve tribes are again inscribed on the gates, for although the aspect is governmental, God's purposes are not apart from His ancient people, and they are unchangeable.

— Still looking forward to that coming period when Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely, it is written: "And this is the name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah-Tsidkenu — the Lord our righteousness." In every expression of the grace of God towards His saints in the past or in the coming dispensation, we find a corresponding promise to the saved ones of the period; so as to this last name, we are made the righteousness of God in Christ, which is infinitely beyond what has been known in the past or will be known hereafter.

But returning to a consideration of the divine name given in Exodus, I would remind the reader of One on earth who assumed, and rightly assumed, the incomprehensible name with which our charter begins. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was *I am*" — Thus we see without question that the Man of Nazareth, the lowly street preacher, who did not disdain to be a guest in the cottages of the poor, had become by the indwelling Logos, the same who at the burning bush could declare His name and His memorial unto all generations, and that His presence was holy, rendering the locality so. How unspeakable, indeed incomprehensible, the grace which shone forth when the omnipotent Creator came out from the glory which had ever been His dwelling place, and coming into a scene defiled by sin, could there take up and demonstrate in His own life as Son the character of a walk which would be to the glory of God in the every-day circumstances which all are called to pass through. And as we individually fulfil the routine devolving upon us in business, family or social

surroundings, how inspiring it is to realize that we are on the same plane of action as our blessed Saviour was, and like John can not only look upon Him as He walked, but also in our testimony lead others to follow Him.

It is true that no man knoweth the Son but the Father, yet the revelation which has come to us of the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ has set before us an object of such transcendent glory that our heart's affections have been engaged thereby and the moral glory upon which we have been looking, has had such a transforming effect that as the result of continuous occupation we are being changed to the same image from glory to glory through the operation of the Spirit. Thus as time passes the immeasurable distance between our former unregenerate state and the present fitness to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light becomes more apparent, but the impending great change will be of such a character that effete bodies with all the weakness attaching thereto will be replaced by imperishable

bodies for whom time and space will have ceased to have a meaning, and sin will have no place, as the nature, so-called, will have been taken away.

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V.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

There can be no question as to whom above quotation refers. The child upon whose shoulder the government was to be laid refers clearly to the millennial reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." But there is more: His name shall be called Wonderful — elsewhere the word is translated Secret, and indeed it is both; it is beyond human grasp and incomprehensible. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, . . . believed on in the world, received up into

glory." When the godless writers who are so busily engaged in detraction of Christ come to stand before God and find to their dismay that the God before whom they are arraigned is the one whom they have done their utmost to dethrone, it will then be manifest to them that instead of knowing the unknowable, their poisonous darts have been cast against the Wonderful One whom no man knoweth but the Father.

This word Wonderful has, through common usage, lost very much of its force and meaning, but if we can apprehend what is implied in its application to the Lord, we shall see that it opens an illimitable prospect.

Was it not wonderful that a righteous and holy God should have been able not only to spare but to justify an unrighteous and unholy race, every one of whom had sinned against Him, and without any qualification of those attributes or any lowering of a standard to which none ever had attained? Who could ever have conceived the thought

that God could in anywise justify a sinner, when the proclamation had gone forth that the soul that sinneth shall die, and all had sinned, for the enemy of souls had succeeded in leading all captive at his will. But One came into this scene, manifesting moral qualities hitherto unknown, and although in intimate contact with sinners contracted no defilement thereby, but contrariwise, fed multitudes with miraculously created bread, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, and all being beyond the power of man, evidenced the presence of a divine person. Thus grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. But more: such an exhibition, although wonderful, did not, nor could not, break the fetters in which Satan's captives were held. God's unchangeable decree was: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Life had been forfeited, and the forfeit must be paid. Could anything be more wonderful than that God's own Son should assume a debt which had been accumulating, and anticipatively would be continued for the duration of time, and the payment for that debt was to be, and could only be, in blood. The

heart of man was so completely alienated from God that Satan was enabled to arouse therein uncompromising hatred through the very contrast which the life of Christ as a man among men presented to their own, a hatred which culminated in the demand for His life's blood and which obtained it. Thus the two greatest extremes were presented — the heart of God, and the heart of man. But why did not God interpose to prevent His Son from ignominy and death? The answer had been given that "unless a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone." The debt would not have been paid, for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission," but through that meritorious death of Christ God was propitiated towards every sinner who by faith would identify himself with that sacrifice, and since God had raised from the dead and glorified the holy victim, and righteously so, because of the glory brought to Him through the maintenance of His holy claims.

So also in consequence of the debtor's trust in the value of the redemption paid for

him there was so complete an identification between the Redeemer and the redeemed that God could, and did, and does account the believing sinner as in the bundle of life with his dear Son whom having righteously glorified, He must as a necessary sequence attribute the same righteousness to the believer who had by His grace through a God-given faith become one with Christ.

It is all so very wonderful; so profound, and yet so simple. A child can lay hold of and appropriate propitiation and substitution, as these principles are among the earliest the human mind can realise, although the words may not be understood. Thus our gracious God, in His desire that none should perish, has made the way of salvation so clear that half-demented minds have been able to grasp it, while the greatest philosophers, the keenest intellects, stumble over its simplicity and many enter eternity unsaved.

His name expresses not only what He is called, but what He is — Wonderful. And not only so, He is Counsellor. Now there are men ready to counsel, but often the ad-

vice tendered is not wise. There is One and One only who is the embodiment of wisdom, which coming down from above "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated." He is indeed our divine counsellor, and whether it is an appeal to come unto Him and find rest from intolerable burdens; or an injunction to buy from Him gold tried in the fire; He is the One to whom we ever resort for counsel.

Furthermore, He is the Mighty God, this Child that was born, this Son that was given; the first and only manifestation in human flesh of the invisible God; for while there had been appearances, angelic or otherwise, in past ages, it was always but transient and evidently not corporeal; now, however, the great Creator was seen by angelic hosts and under circumstances so amazing as to call forth expressions of worship which serve to link us up with innumerable heavenly beings whose adoration is of the same character as ours, although not based on the same foundation, yet all to the same glorious and worthy One, our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Philip said unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.” And these are the words of the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and in the face of such a statement, and from such a source, well may we say, No man knoweth the Son but the Father.

Our Lord Jesus is declared to be the Prince of Life — He is that eternal life that was ever with the Father; He is the antetype of the tree of life that was in the earthly paradise, now found bearing twelve manner of fruit in the heavenly paradise, and later in the midst of the one street of the celestial city. There are those who have apprehended but little of eternal life; their whole

thought has been to minister to a natural life which has ceased to exist and the Prince of life has been but little known. There are those, however, who have sat down under His shadow with great delight and who have found His fruit sweet. He is also the Prince of peace, and He is our peace; He has made peace by the work of the cross, and so complete and perfect is that peace that the Christian has no more conscience of sins; but in the coming age the Prince of peace shall have undisputed sway, and righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. There will, however, be two periods, in the first of which the injunction is: "Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up: beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." After He has accomplished His strange work and cut it short in righteousness, the injunction will be to beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks, for the reign of the Prince of peace has come.

VI.

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.”

Of the furniture of the tabernacle there was the golden candlestick made of pure gold. There was the main shaft and six branches, making seven lamps, and the three on either side were so set as to light up the beautiful workmanship of beaten gold of which the candlestick was made. There were also the knops and flowers under the branches, and finally there was the holy oil compounded from a prescription divinely ordered; apart from this, however, everything pertaining to the candlestick was of pure gold.

The word of God has a significance very often overlooked, and when we read that in His temple all things speak of His glory we are inclined to accept the statement in abstract, overlooking special application. In the seven lamp-holders of the candlestick there is presented the perfection of it all which the number signifies. There were bowls to contain the holy oil to feed the lamps, and this is still the office of the Holy Spirit and ever will be, that is to show forth the glories of Christ; the candlestick of beaten gold being the suffering Saviour, and the golden almonds and flowers His fruit and fragrance, and this fruit is significantly expressed by the almond, which is the first to manifest life in the vegetable world of eastern lands after the death sleep of winter. Our Lord Jesus was the first begotten from the dead.

The branches are for support of the lights; but not only that, they have a moral significance quite apart from the use to which they are assigned in the construction of the candlestick. A rod was to come out of the

stem of Jesse, and a branch grow out of his roots. The blending of the divine and human in the person of Christ has never been fathomed, and never can be, and although some scriptures present one aspect, and others a different, there is but one Christ, and the holy union is so interwoven that a division is impossible, and so intended. In a previous chapter we have had under consideration Isaiah's presentment of the mighty God the Everlasting Father, and the same writer gives us to see in the scripture now before us the glorious humanity of our adorable and precious Saviour, the rod of the stem of Jesse, the Son of David, the sprout from his roots. Upon Him the Spirit of Jehovah was to rest. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses. The spirit of wisdom and understanding, He was to be the embodiment of wisdom, as Solomon gives us the personification of it. He was that wisdom that is from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. Further-

more, He was to be of quick understanding. How important that the saint of God should have wisdom and understanding. These are two of the foundation principles presented in Colossians: There is first the knowledge of His will; and we must know His will before we can do it, and this is only obtained by the inspired word. Wisdom is needed as to the meaning of what we read.

Following these, and in moral order, there is necessary the spiritual understanding that will enable us to adapt the knowledge and the wisdom acquired to every circumstance of life practically, so that the saint of God may be furnished to every good work. The spirit of counsel and might: The former of these has been previously considered. All power, all authority, has been committed unto the Son of Man in heaven and in earth. He is the head of the restored creation, the last Adam. He has put down everything that arose against Himself, and soon will reign before His ancients gloriously. And of the fear of the Lord: While all that concerns ourselves in our relationship and responsi-

bility to God has been made clear to the weakest comprehension, the walk of the Son of God as Son of Man in this world as the obedient, subject, dependent One, who was heard for His piety, is an inscrutable mystery, and will continue to be so until the obscurity of our spiritual vision shall have been succeeded by a clearness of sight that will enable us to see as we are seen; and our enlarged capacities will there produce worship and adoration suited to our new surroundings and more to the glory and praise of the glorious One who died for us. This we are assured of. An enlarged apprehension; a mental expansion beyond what can now be conceived will increase the joy of the redeemed to the promised fulness.

The discovery on earth of a new world was a great event. Distinct in its civilization and wealth, it created the greatest interest; but what will be the interest the saint of God will be filled with as he sees his beloved Saviour the centre and glory of that heavenly sphere, and himself at home there. The surroundings will be new and strange, but

the child of God will be at once at home inasmuch as it will not be a stranger God who greets him, but the same precious Saviour whom he has known, and has been in continual communion with in all the wilderness journey, whose preciousness he has somewhat realized but the fulness of apprehension can only be in His very presence. Oh, fellow-Christian, do you know that "in His presence there is fulness of joy at His right hand, there are pleasures for evermore," and may I ask, Do you "sit down under His shadow with great delight and find His fruit sweet to your taste?" If so, there will have been a beginning here of an eternal occupation, for the fruit of the tree of life, which grows in the paradise of God is perennial, a blessed food which will be assimilated to the divine nature, and doubtless produce growth, yet the object ever before the soul, although increasingly apprehended, will not be fully so, but the knowledge of the Peerless One will never reach a termination, for then as now, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father."

VII.

"My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed Thee forever. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She will be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework."

The psalmist's heart was not only inditing but it was bubbling up, and so it would be with every Christian when contemplating the glories of the One, who although God over all blessed forever, as man brought redemption to a race, made in the likeness and

image of God, but fallen, and ensnared by Satan, and led captive at his will; and in all the divine manifestations from Bethlehem to Calvary the effulgence of glory, however presented, was that of the One whom the psalmist's heart overflowed at the thought of. Have you, dear reader, found Him fairer than the children of men? Have you found Him the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely one? He is the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley. Everything in the world expressive of beauty or worth, when applied typically to the Lord Jesus, falls immeasurably short of expressing His moral perfections, but God in His grace appeals so often to finite minds through comparisons and contrasts that some rays of the effulgent glory break through the clouds of human limitation enabling the devout soul to lay hold of and appropriate somewhat of that which in its fullness characterizes the glorious scene awaiting the believer in Christ.

How very feeble our apprehension of the grace of God as manifested in Christ. He

was full of grace even up to the lips. Mark the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth; consider the gracious ways of this heavenly stranger, doing good to all, even to the most undeserving, the most unthankful: "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, but what value was or is grace to those who do not think they need it? And to those who are of their father the devil, who has been a liar from the beginning, what value can truth have in the eyes of such?

In a world where righteousness is exotic and wickedness indigenous, few there are who love the former and hate the latter, that is essentially; for while righteousness is attenuated to uprightness, and wickedness is made to consist only in that which shocks the moral sense of the unregenerate man, in the common acceptance of the terms, the One to whom the quotation refers knew both to their fullest, and was in Himself an ex-

emplification of righteousness. We are given to see in the moral gospel a raiment, indicative of character, which was not only whiter than any fuller on earth could white it, but dazzling in its outward presentation, and surely no other life ever seen in the world presented or could present such inherent righteousness as that which was seen on the holy mount. It is interesting to see that because of this He was anointed with the oil of gladness. And so for us there is the oil of gladness for those who are walking in His footsteps; the unction of the Holy Spirit brings that state of soul which enables the saint of God to rejoice in the Lord always. "All thy garments," the whole course and conduct of life, exhaled a perfume comparable to the most fragrant gums then known; but comparisons of material things with moral qualities must necessarily fall far short of conveying any true apprehension of such qualities; they merely point on — as the road guides in olden days did to the distant town — and intimate to the reader that continuance along the same road which the illustrations have indicated will lead to a

fuller grasp of important truths, although it may be, never fully to be realized.

“Out of the ivory palaces”—Praise waits for Him in Zion, and praise from His redeemed creatures is grateful incense to the great and glorious One who inhabiteth eternity. It is amazing that our God should desire as worshippers those who had been sinners and in rebellion against Him, but His grace has changed the whole condition of things for those to whom a new nature has been communicated. A live coal from off the altar has touched the impure lips, and now no longer the medium of defiled communications, the same lips when purified are capable of offering praise to the great and gracious God.

I turn for a little from the delightful task of seeking to exalt my adorable Saviour to the consideration of the bride of the Lamb, for although the presentation before us is of the King's daughter; the King's bride; yet the approaching heavenly nuptials will far exceed those of the earthly bride, and the greater includes and goes beyond the lesser.

She is all glorious within, for is not her vesture of wrought gold, and this is emblematic of that which is divine.

The operation wrought by the Holy Spirit in the soul is of God, and possible because of the work of the cross, so that the inner clothing is not only of gold but indeed of beaten gold, expressive of the result of the suffering of Christ upon the cross. And the contemplation of what our redemption has necessitated to make us fit for God's presence and suited companions for His Son, calls forth from regenerated hearts the deepest expression of worship and praise. There is, furthermore, another aspect of the bride's clothing, and that is the outer, in which the beautiful needlework is expressive of the exercises of soul through which the Christian is passed in the process of working out his own salvation with fear and trembling. What God sees in the believer and what the world sees should be more and more apparent and coalescent as the Christian character develops, so that it may be said of them as of those of old, 'They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.

VIII.

"In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke."

That the prosperous and highly favoured reign of Uzziah should have ended so unhappily for him is one of many illustrations in scripture that the one who exalteth himself shall be abased. Unmindful of the divine favour so richly bestowed upon him for so many years — the abundance of his possessions — the subjugation of his enemies — the large and well-equipped army ready to

obey his orders — and the staff of capable men by whom he was surrounded — he assumed to be God's high priest as well as God's King; a union of supreme offices reserved for God's own Son, and the inevitable result was, not only his expulsion from the priest's office, at which he was grasping, but also the loss of his royal estate. He was a leper unto the day of his death.

Adam and Eve wished to be as gods, knowing good and evil, they acquired the knowledge by disobedience without the power to attain the one or to resist the other, and with it they became mortal.

Haman desired the highest place in the kingdom; he got it, but it was his death.

Presently a man will be seen at Jerusalem who will assume both royalty and priesthood, but the royalty will be imputed, and from the Romans; and the priesthood will be satanic, as the libations he will pour out will be to another god, and not to Jehovah. His end will be the lake of fire.

All these and many others in every period of the world's history, both in ancient and

modern times, have exalted themselves only to be abased, but God's man who humbled Himself and became obedient even to the death of the cross, God has exalted, and given Him a name that is above every name. In the days of His humiliation He bore the cross, now and for all time the crown is His.

Returning again to Uzziah, the question arises, why was this manifestation given at that particular period, and why was it so remarkably connected with the leprous king? The whole of these presentations and the incidents connected therewith have been given by the Holy Spirit to the exaltation and glorification of God, the Creator; so much needed by Uzziah, and so much needed in every age since. Alas, that the lesson then taught as to the glory of the divine person on the throne before whom the highest angelic beings veiled their faces and their feet as they proclaimed His holiness, has been lost to those who so much need to take it to heart, and man profanely intrudes where angels fear to tread. The Jehovah of whom Isaiah speaks is by John connected with Jesus of

Nazareth, who raised Lazarus from the dead. Who but God could speak a life-giving word — who but God is worthy to receive seraphic adoration, and who but God could command the attendance of twelve legions of angels? How fitting then that the profane act of Uziah should by the Holy Spirit be placed indelibly on record as an object lesson for the restraining of men at the present day who are uniting and speaking detractingly of the blessed Saviour. What an awakening awaits those unhappy men who fail to see that the poor Nazarene who found a resting place in the cottage at Bethany was the same whose train once filled the temple; and who, coming again to this earth, will be attended by myriads of heavenly beings.

Words seem to be almost meaningless when an attempt is made to set forth the moral glory of the self-abasement — may we not say self-effacement — of the Almighty God who could be manifested in creature condition in order that the foundation of His throne which is set in holiness and truth might be maintained and manifestly so, and

yet at the same time the grace brought to the guilty race which only deserved destructive judgment. How incomprehensible to the natural mind that the Son of God should take upon Himself the judgment deserved by us, and how amazing that such a substitution should be regarded with indifference by those for whom it was made.

It was an object lesson in Isaiah's day — it will be an object lesson when His feet stand again on the Mount of Olives and the mountain splits asunder at the contact, making a connection between the streams flowing west to the Mediterranean and those flowing eastward to the Dead Sea, developing a raging torrent from the higher to the lower level while those in the vicinity flee as they fled in the days of Uzziah at the time of the earthquake. What the circumstances attending this earthquake were are unknown, but it would appear that God was speaking to the king before he committed the grave offence recorded by Isaiah, but he did not recognize the voice, nor do the nations at the present time realize, although individ-

uals may, that the hand of God has been of late laid very heavily upon christendom, not only for the dishonour done to His Son, but for the shameful attacks upon His word which He had magnified above all His name.

The One whom men now speak so detractingly of will soon again come to this earth, but in marked contrast to His previous sojourn here. Then a humble, lowly man, not having where to lay His head, dependent upon a fish for money to pay His taxes, but in the coming period the wearer of many crowns, King of kings, Lord of lords. The doors of the prison at Philippi opened of their own accord for the release of the Lord's servants; in the coming day the everlasting doors and gates will be lifted up, and the appeal is directly to them, that the King of Glory may come in, and well may the enquiry be made: Who is the King of Glory? Mark the reply: Jehovah of Hosts — He is the King of Glory.

O could the children of God apprehend the glory of the Person whom they lightly speak

of as Jesus, not remembering the word which says: This same Jesus whom ye have crucified, He hath made both Lord and Christ, the familiarity with which the name is often used would be restrained, and the title now given by the Holy Spirit would be used instead. We have been brought into the holiest, we have been set at liberty in His holy presence, but let us be careful not to use that liberty as a cause of offence.

IX.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."

The Old Testament scriptures, which have been under consideration thus far, have brought before us various manifestations of God as Jehovah, while those we are about to review still bring God before us, but as man. Our Lord Jesus Christ was God manifest in human flesh, through the indwelling Logos, the expression of the mind of God; the ever-existing One, so that it is evident that the word is not translatable and might better have been left as in the original. When we use the expression, word, the thought conveyed is that it is an indication of the mind and not the mind itself, so that Logos

goes much further, and is indeed the whole mind of God, as to His dealings with the world, as to His relationship with His own therein, and as to all the inexpressible blessings which have come thereto; His children being the partakers of the fulness of Christ. When did the Logos originate? Never. When will He cease to exist? Never. He is from everlasting to everlasting. Surely the Man Christ Jesus was born into the world in time, and at a fixed period, and from that epoch and throughout all eternity He is the embodiment of the Logos, yet this does not at all affect the postulate that the Logos never had a beginning.

What a vista this opens up to the believer! Sustained by divine upholding through the priesthood of our precious Saviour, he is thereby enabled to pass through an enemy's country in perfect safety, kept by an unconquerable power, and ministered to by unseen angelic agencies. And not only this, but a record of divine ways in the past has been communicated to us, together with an unfolding of all the future, not only for time,

but for the eternity beyond, so that the Christian, knowing the power, the love and the wisdom that is engaged for him is above the reach of all circumstances of this life, as well as of all that the enemy of souls can do for his destruction, although, alas, the yielding to Satanic suggestions, through ignorance of their source, may rob a child of God of any reward in the glory, and that will be irreparable, as it will be forever and ever.

The Logos was the Creator of all things, not only the world in which we live, but all the vast universe as well, and all declare His glory. He gave to all their laws at their creation, laws not only regulating the vast orbits in which they revolve, but also animate and inanimate creation existing therein; but vast and incomprehensible as all this is, it is not said to exist in Him; but now mark the distinction between all this and ourselves as Christians; we are in Christ before God; in Him we live and move and have our being.

To be the objects of God's care and love while in this world is amazing; but to be des-

tined for intimate association hereafter with the great and glorious Being we have been contemplating, is far, far beyond the mental grasp of the greatest human intellect; we can only wonder and adore.

But there is more: In Him was life and the life was the light of men; an interchangeable proposition, and of all created intelligences only applicable to mankind. What then was the depth of the moral darkness which did not comprehend the light, or the life of which it was the expression. The light did not dispel the darkness; it made the darkness manifest; as it does at the present day, and all the many, many heresies that are abroad are condemned by that light which simply makes the darkness apparent that it is not the light. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

If the Logos had not become flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth: if the man Christ Jesus had not taken up the

cause of a condemned race, and by making expiation opened the doors of heaven to all believers, how awful would now have been the position of the whole human family, and how awful even now for those who do not receive Him! Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and it is remarkable that the verb is in the singular instead of the plural. The qualities thus expressed are so interwoven, so interdependent, that the ordinary grammatical construction would not convey the thought intended by the Holy Spirit.

Thus the Logos became a Man, and that Man was the Lamb of God — necessarily so, for the Logos could not be immolated, the Man could; and the spotless victim could not be more fittingly spoken of than as a lamb, the one guileless animal in God's animate creation. Sins had to be atoned for, and could only be washed away by blood, and only the blood of God's Lamb could make atonement. It is also said that this Lamb of God is the taker-away of the sin of the world. There is perhaps no statement in scripture concerning Christ Jesus our Lord

that more fully and clearly sets forth His Deity than this. Man, when created, was innocent; he was without conscience, for he needed none; but having fallen from innocency through a knowledge of good and evil, he acquired a conscience, and a nature wholly distinct from that in which he had been created. This fallen nature has continued with Adam's posterity to the present, and will continue until the end of time. It is spoken of in scripture as sin, in distinction from sins, its outcome, and the flesh. Many sincere but mistaken persons have thought that this evil principle could be eradicated by a life of practical holiness. Now, however much to be desired, and however commendable such a life may be, the root principle of evil is not eradicated thereby, nor will it be until death or the Lord's coming for His saints, severs the link with a fallen creation. What power in heaven or in earth could communicate a new nature, or what power could take away the old. God only. When Christ comes for His redeemed it will be without sin unto salvation. The former will be taken away when the shout is

heard, and the latter will have been completed at the same time, and as the saints rise in clouds to meet their Saviour, they will realize that the nature left with them in divine wisdom for their heavenly education through continual watchfulness is now taken away, because no longer needed, and that the salvation of which that of the soul is the first step, and the practical working of it out the second, the culmination has been reached in the salvation of the body. All, all is grace. What He has done and what He has enabled us to do. Blessed be His great and holy name.

X.

“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of The Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

It is amazing that any question should arise as to the status of the Son of God, who although brought into the world under human conditions, was yet the child of a virgin; to the mind of man an inconceivable fact. No other child had ever been thus born and none other ever will be, as there is no intimation in scripture of any other race headship than the two recorded, the first and the last Adam, that which is natural and that which is spiritual. We are told in the Old testament that sacrifice and offering would cease to be offered because One was coming whose ears were to be digged, but when in the New Testament this passage is referred

to it is said: A body hast thou prepared me. Both statements are blessedly true, the digged ears indicating perpetual service, of which the Hebrew servant was a type, and a habitation of flesh for the eternal God was to be prepared, and if so it must be holy and undefiled. How infinite the wisdom displayed in every act of God, but of all His wondrous ways none manifest His superwisdom like the conception and birth of His beloved Son. There had never before been spotless humanity, but if atonement was to be made for the sins of the people, it must be by one absolutely free from a sinful nature, and against whom no offence could be charged. There never had been such an one until the bringing in of His only begotten Son into the world, whom the angels were called upon to worship. How insensate the folly of those who would disallow these qualities in our blessed Lord — they have no Saviour and the salvation which they profess to have is mere delusion. All the various forms of this unbelief, whether those shockingly gross or those more refined and subtle, will have a common termination, banishment

forever from the presence of the exalted and glorious Being who was presented to God as a sweet savour in that He maintained inviolate His holiness and righteousness, and to man presented as a propitiatory of such infinite value that faith therein sets the sinner before God in a completely changed position; not as before, under judgment and awaiting its execution, but freed completely from all charge, and in the bundle of life with God's dear Son, the One whom these detractors had so wickedly maligned.

From Eden to Calvary the Spirit of God was ever announcing the advent of One who would annul the power of him who had the power of death and liberate his captives, but Satan, the great enemy of souls, is a spirit, and how then could flesh and blood maintain a conflict and triumph over one whose abode was in heavenly places? If a mere man were to enter the lists in such a combat where would be the power to cope with such an adversary. If our precious Saviour were not God as well as man He would be powerless as against Satan, and

this is so self-evident that it should forever silence all these wretched detractors.

There seems to be much confusion in the minds of many children of God as to the person of the blessed Saviour. Yet if the scriptures were taken as given there should be none. It is written: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"—and after the fall of man it was declared that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Four thousand years passed and the One who was to do this great work had not appeared, although there was a continuous line of prophecy as to the Son of God who was to be born into the world. At length, after one hundred generations of forty years each the Angel Gabriel was sent from God to a virgin living in Nazareth to proclaim to her that she was the woman of whom the long-promised seed should come, and when in due course of nature the child was born, angelic hosts celebrated the great event in praises to God. This, then, was the immaculate body prepared for the occupancy of the eternal God; and the mystery

which had surrounded the prophetic announcements was completely elucidated in the holy union of a sinless humanity with the great and ever-existing God, and that union was not divisible, so that the man Christ Jesus was the manifestation, and the only one, of God. When, therefore, the Head is spoken of in Colossians it is not only the Man, but also all that is expressed in the holy union. It has been said that the Son was with the Father before the worlds were created, but these names are not so mentioned. Clearly, they were not applicable, as they are connected with humanity. The Book of Proverbs has been quoted as sustaining the above mentioned statement, but in the well-known chapter referred to wisdom is personified, as also is prudence, and they dwell together, and what is their occupation?"—"to find out knowledge of witty inventions." Surely neither one nor the other can be said to refer to Christ. If it be asked where can true wisdom be found, the answer must be, only in Christ; He is therefore wisdom, but it cannot be said that wisdom is Christ, for this would be giving a

quality — moral if you please — priority to Christ, and therefore a limitation. “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” “Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” — There were no days in eternity.

How much the scriptural and definite statements of our adorable Saviour would, if accepted, exalt the apprehension of Him in the minds of His saints, and how great would be their blessing if all the mists which surround His glorious person were cleared away. If all the many statements as to Him which are not applicable were compared with the the standard of the holy scriptures of truth, would it not tend to an increase in the knowledge of God and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ as enjoined upon us. And is it not most important, as we look up into an opened heaven and see our Redeemer on the throne of God, to know Him, insofar as our limited capacity, enables us, when enlightened by the word? In the world there are those with whom we have merely a bowing ac-

quaintance, some with whom we can converse, but of an inner and intimate circle whom we fully know and to whom we are known, how few the number. And so it is with many saints of God. Some know Him as having died for them; few know him as living for them; and in the enduring relationships recorded, few, few indeed, are in intimate contact with the One who greatly desires such intimacy.

“Master, where dwellest thou? “Come and see.” “They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.”

And so for us, the end is near; it is almost the close of the day. God grant that what remains may be passed in closest communion with Himself.

XI.

“Verily, I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

“And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James and John, his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun and His raiment was white as the light.”

The occurrence on the holy mount is recorded by three of the evangelists, but two only speak of it as a transfiguration, and these two present it from a Jewish point of view, that is after six days; while in Luke it is about eight days after, evidently the new creation, and as the appearances of the Lord differ in the various recitals it is evident that a moral significance attaches to the event as

seen from those points of view, rather than a physical. In Matthew the person of the Lord is the prominent feature: "His face did shine as the sun." As the Messiah of a future day His glory will be manifested and His reign will be inaugurated with all the fitting accompaniments of the King of kings. His reign will be as Son of Man, but it will be before His ancients gloriously. The earth itself will be convulsed as the feet of its Creator touch its surface, and the beginning of His millennial reign will be over a redeemed race, all having been brought to know Him, from the least to the greatest. Sad to say, this happy state of things will not continue, but again under the responsibility of man the end will be disastrous except for those who will be kept for the renewed earth.

In the gospel of the Perfect Servant it is not the person that is brought before us, but the character of the Servant. "His raiment was whiter than any fuller on earth could white it." It is stated elsewhere that the white raiment was indicative of righteous-

ness, and in Him there was that which was beyond human attainment.

In the gospel of the Son of Man this aspect is more fully evidenced in the whiteness which was dazzling; indeed this King of kings dwells in an unapproachable light, His holiness and righteousness are beyond the grasp of human powers. Words fail to convey to the mind of man more than the feeblest apprehension of the moral glory of our precious Saviour, and as in the changed conditions of another sphere into which we are about to enter, the food of the saints will be the fruit of the tree of life growing in the paradise of God, so throughout eternity there will be an ever-increasing realisation of His glory, which will be found to be an inexhaustible theme, and the occupation therewith will give fulness of joy — nothing else can possibly do so.

It is somewhat remarkable that the word translated transfigured occurs but four times in the New Testament — twice as to the Lord, and twice as to the saints, in the for-

mer case absolute, in the latter conditional. The apostle says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your intelligent service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed (transfigured) by the renewing of your mind." And again: "But we all, with unveiled face looking upon the glory of the Lord, are changed (transfigured) into the same image from glory to glory." We shall be like our Saviour when we are clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, but a blessed provision has been made for us even here, that the occupation with His glory produces a moral transformation in the saints which will be perpetuated and still further developed in eternity.

Abram looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. He saw through a glass darkly, whereas the Spirit of God has revealed to us things which in the past eye had not seen nor ear heard; we have been brought into the sanctuary and we have had most precious truths communi-

cated to us, directly from the glory into which our Forerunner has for us entered. The revelations made to the saints are calculated to develop a reciprocal affection to the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. When we see on the one side the love of One who could lay down His life for those who cared not for Him, and on the other side an indifference to all the appeals from the suffering and sacrificed Saviour, what a consuming desire should animate His own to know the love which passeth knowledge—to know Himself—for He is the embodiment of every virtue, and the most attractive personality in heaven or in earth. It is His purpose to have tried and trusted companions to whom He can communicate His purposes and the execution of them, in the great interminable future. How paltry the fame and honours of this world are in comparison with those of the next. In the Grecian games the racers in the stadium saw three laurel crowns over the course as an incentive to put forth every energy, but these were not lasting, while the three reward crowns reserved for the winner in the great race the

saints are running are durable — they do not fade away. There are therefore degrees of attainment in heaven as there are upon earth. The angelic hosts know an archangel; they know Michael, a prince, and they know Gabriel; and when the heavens are peopled by a new race which is being passed through a tutelage here preparatory to a change of scene and occupation, doubtless there will be those whose apprehension of what they have been apprehended for, will have led to a diligence in their preparation for it, and this again, which grace will have led to, will be rewarded by a joint occupancy of the throne of the Son of Man. What amazing incentives there are to diligence in this our heavenly education, and what happiness will be the portion of those whose lives here have been governed by a preparation for the future. Doubtless it will be a wonderful change when the saints are translated, and transformed to the likeness of Christ, even for those who have barely obtained an entrance into heaven; yet these will not know nor will they understand the rapture of those whose heart's affections have been en-

gaged with the Glorious One who is waiting to receive them; who have made his acquaintance in an earthly pilgrimage in which there has been a conscious sense of His sustaining and guiding grace; who have in fact been in such intimate relationship with Him here that when received into the paradise of God they will be at once at home there, for in the midst of all the principalities and powers in heavenly places they will see their Friend and Redeemer and will be at home in His presence.

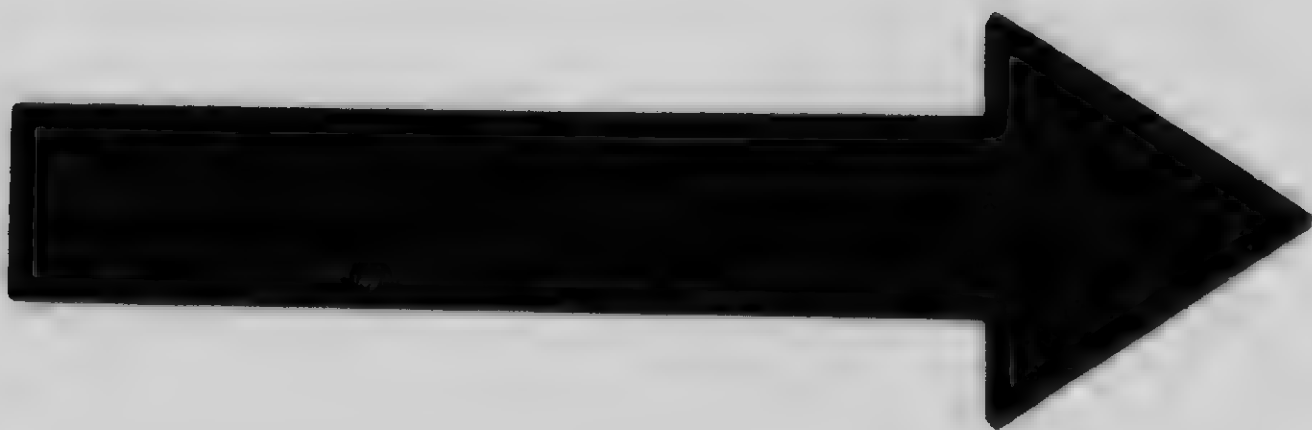
XII.

“And they crucified Him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet — They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.”

The work of atonement wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross stands out in all its moral grandeur as the highest manifestation of the wisdom of God. All the complex operations of the Spirit of God for centuries were in view of this supreme event; and all that was transpiring as the stream of time flowed on, had as an objective the propitiatory sacrifice of God's beloved Son. But how was it possible that a righteous and holy God could be propitiated, when the moral distance between His height of glory and the degraded condition of His creatures was immeasurable? But when the substitutionary aspect is considered the wonder is boundless, for in this is seen not

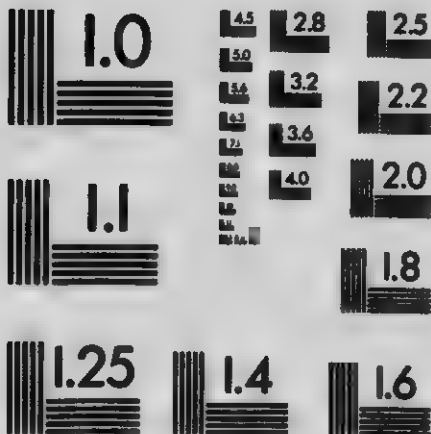
only that God's wrath against the sinner had been appeased, not only that his offences have been obliterated, but that the offender has been recreated, and by a mysterious operation of God's Holy Spirit joined to and made a part of the One who had taken His place and assumed his obligations, when these had been repented of, and unbelief been replaced by trust and confidence.

The sacrifice of the cross was vicarious — that is to say, it was for others; and it has many aspects. God's righteous claims had to be met to the utmost. If there was a fraction of abatement it would have been at the expense of righteousness and holiness, which are the foundations of His throne; but the debt was fully paid and the repentant debtor is fully absolved. It was this satisfaction of divine justice and its consequence that called forth the agonized cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There was no answer to the holy sufferer, but we have it in the scripture which says: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in



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Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

There is another presentation of the suffering of the Holy One recorded, not, however, as enduring the judgment of God, but the relentless persecution of His enemies on account of righteousness: "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head." In the sufferings of Christ to which what has been said has reference, there has been no account taken of His sympathetic or personal sufferings, as these are apart from the object intended in this treatise, but they are there, and His broken heart should call forth from His redeemed the affectionate response of grateful praise as the inmost movement of His Spirit is thus revealed to us.

It was the Lamb of God that was the propitiatory: "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," but a holy life was not mediatorial; it was only in the death of the Mediator that reconciliation could be accomplished, and

that it was so the rending of the veil of the temple abundantly manifested, for thus a way of approach to God was made, and a reconciled God could now come forth from the thick darkness in which before He had dwelt, and reveal Himself to His guilty creatures as the God of all grace, which indeed He was.

There are many pious expressions abroad, in hymns and elsewhere, as to the Lord Jesus leaving His throne above, veiling His glory, and coming down to earth to die for His people, and it is thought that Philippians sustains this view, where we have the injunction that the mind of Christ should be in His saints, but it is all earthly, as a careful reading of the scripture will prove. The Man of Nazareth had no pre-existence, and it was after His meritorious work, not before, that He sat down upon the throne of God. It was this Man who died upon the cross; the eternal God cannot die, and this is as far as the word of God appears to warrant any statement as to the glorious expiatory work of Calvary. It is, indeed, holy

ground upon which we are treading, and the approach thereto has not been made lightly, but with deep exercise of heart and earnest prayer.

The gospels give us a historical account of the death of Christ, but the types and shadows of the past are necessary to a fuller apprehension of the work of the cross. In the burnt offering the entire animal was bound on the altar as a sweet savour to Jehovah. It had been cut in pieces and the inwards and legs washed with water; in the anti-type the heart and the will were ever governed by His holy Spirit; no cleansing was needed there. It was the offerer who killed the bullock, but although man by wicked hands crucified the Lord of glory, yet it was God's predeterminate counsel that the spotless victim should be offered. The historical records give no indication of the sweet savour, how necessary then the type.

The meat-offering is Christ's spotless humanity, and while not in itself vicarious, being bloodless, it is only for those who are

under the shelter of the blood — who by the grace of God have been made a holy priesthood.

The peace-offering is the communion of saints, but based on the sacrifice of the cross. The richness of the moral inwards, and the life as indicated by the fat and the blood, had been burned and ascended as a sweet savour to God, but the offering was eaten by the priests, with the exception that if any were unclean, such were excluded; and what communion can there be between a Christian walking with God and one walking with the world?

The sin-offering has quite a different character from those we have been considering. The offerer does not approach as a worshipper, identified with the offering, but identified with his sins, for which the offering was to be a purgation. It is a very blessed and very happy thing for us that the priest who sprinkled the blood of the victim identified himself with the victim by eating thereof, now for us our precious Saviour is both priest and victim. He offers Himself with-

out spot to God, but as in the type, there is the identification, and He is both. This, then, is the basis of our approach to God, without which neither the peace offering nor the meat offering would have any value for

The red heifer sacrifice, although quite distinct in character from the four primary sacrifices, is still important, particularly for Christians, inasmuch as it plainly indicates the manner in which a defiled believer is restored to communion with God. There can be no reapplication of the blood; the value of the shed blood is permanent, but the conscience of the offender must be brought under exercise, and nothing can accomplish this more effectually than the remembrance of the cost at which sins had been atoned for, and whether the defilement had come in through contact with that which is most esteemed in the world, or least esteemed, the cedar or the hyssop, the exercise wrought in the conscience of the defiled is through remembrance of sins forgiven through the work of the cross.

XIII.

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

As each portion of the precious scriptures of God come before us, there seems to be an advance of divine unfoldings, lifting the soul up to a higher altitude in its apprehension of the glory and majesty of our adorable Saviour; and what, indeed, could more effectually deepen and absorb the believer's interest or engage every faculty of the heart and mind than to stand within hearing of the words uttered by the Lord of Glory as He speaks to His Father, which grace gives us to do, and as we thus listen, with what won-

der we hear that the prayer thus uttered has for its burden His interest in, and love for poor weak failing children of men whom He has rescued from destruction and made fit companions for His heavenly and eternal kingdom.

Although the divine speaker is God manifest in flesh, He retains the position He has taken as a dependant man upon earth, yet He has power over all flesh and the communicator of eternal life, the characteristics of which are knowledge of the true God and of the Sent One, and furthermore He asks to be glorified with the glory in which He was before the foundation of the world. How could there be any understanding of such a request apart from the inspired word which tells us He was in His own person both God and man, and while the human side of this incomprehensible union is at times more evidently manifested, as at Gethsemane and Calvary, yet the coalescence was perfect and indivisible, and in that union was the eternal God whose glory was from eternity, veiled indeed in time in human flesh,

but after the accomplishment of redemption, displayed in its fullest manner on the throne of God of which the coming into the world of the Holy Spirit is the attestation. What joy it is then for the child of God to see upon the heavenly throne a glorified man who, having passed through the trying circumstances of an earthly existence, inspires in us the confidence and trust of a mutual experience, so that wisdom and power are in unison with love and sympathy for weak and weary pilgrims, in a journey beset with snares, pitfalls and dangers through which there would be no possibility of safe conduct apart from the sustainment of the One who has learned these difficulties and dangers experimentally, without, however, the prime inheritance from our first parents of a fallen nature.

It is not the purpose of God to take us to heaven as soon as we are made fit therefor by the new life received, but it is His purpose that we should be sanctified through the truth, and that can only be the word of God. Is it not very sad that the means by

which we may be sanctified in. Little known, while many things which are of no value for a heavenly citizen; many indeed of positive injury; are found of deep and continued interest.

Our citizenship is in heaven, and our Saviour desires our presence there that we may behold His glory, a glory which He had from all eternity, but in time veiled in human form; and this expression comes from His blessed lips as He was about leaving the scene of His Suffering and rejection. He had glorified God in every thought, word and act, as a man in the world, and now He was about to be glorified as a man upon the throne of God — He was about to dismiss His spirit, and His first follower to the paradise of God was a repentant thief, made fit by His grace for His companionship there. For that saved soul there was no space of time between the cross and the glory, nor was there for the One who could give him such an assurance. Is it not, then, shocking to say that our precious Saviour descended into hell, a translation not at all borne out by the

original text, nor indeed is the modified word of hades a correct expression as the statement, "Thou wilt not leave my soul to hades." To go there, indeed, gives no warrant for the change of the word to in.

There were those whom the Lord was about to leave, and for them He prayed, but not only so, He could look down the whole course of this dispensation and see the innumerable company that would believe on Him through their testimony; so that this unique prayer includes present-day living saints on the earth, and is for us of vital importance as indicating the way by which we may glorify our precious Saviour by manifesting a oneness into which grace has called us but to which, alas, we have utterly failed to respond. We are told of an invisible church, but how is the world to be convinced by that of which it can take no knowledge. There is, however, another aspect of this truth. The Father and the Son are not distinct entities, each is in the other and the church is in Christ, and faith accepts what is incomprehensible to sense.

Again and again throughout the communications the Holy Spirit has been pleased to make to us through inspired men, the future inheritance of the saints is largely dwelt upon, and when in addition the Author of our salvation expresses His desire for the companionship of the saints in the coming glory, with joyful anticipation, we can look forward to a future existence when a holy and happy communion will have been established, and that in perpetuity, between the redeemed and the Redeemer; when all His present ways of grace and government apprehended, praise and thanksgiving will replace the doubt and questionings of the present.

May God in His grace so strengthen our faith that we may, as enjoined, "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you."

XIV.

“God who in sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last day spoken unto us by Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by who also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance a more excellent name than they.”

The character of divine communications are thus seen to be variable and consistent with the time at which given, the people to whom given, and the circumstances.

In the Jewish dispensation God seemed very near His people as His throne was in the sanctuary, and holy men were inspired to make known to Israel His mind as to their

governance, down to the minutest details of everyday life. God spake to the fathers by prophetic utterances. and as we turn back to see how these were presented and how they were received, we know that those to whom they were addressed, for the most part, quite disregarded them, and we wonder that the word of God should have been so inoperative in the hearts of those to whom His ways and acts had been so manifested. Israel was nationally in relation with God, and that nation was the depositary of all His communications to the children of men, but then as now the natural mind receiveth not the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned.

In this dispensation God is not speaking by inspired men, nor is He behind a veil. The character of His speaking is by Son; that is, God is speaking directly to man by a Man, and in human language, but in that human body dwelt the eternal God. This is so amazing and so far beyond the mental grasp of the natural man that Satan has had but little difficulty in convincing a vast num-

ber in Christendom that the man Christ Jesus was only that, and even with many Christians who believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, there is an utter failure to realize His equality and identification with the God who in the beginning had created the universe, and that identification is so absolute that the word of God can tell us that the Logos, that which was essentially the Deity, became flesh and dwelt among us. Now pause, O reader, to meditate for a moment on this great fact, so clearly set forth in Scripture, and there declared to be a mystery, presented to man indeed for acceptance, although unfathomable, and yet to be accepted by faith, and when so received found to be a source of great joy and blessing to the soul. Our precious Saviour is a glorified man upon the throne of God, but that glorified man is God over all blessed forever. The Logos who dwelt among us and whose glory we beheld has become one with the child of Bethlehem, and that Almighty Creator and Sustainer of the universe is now and forever will be, identified with the Man of Nazareth, that blessed One who made

purgation of sins, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Angels have a wonderful place in the economy of God. In the past they have from time to time been manifested in human form, and their mission in this world ever has been to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation; they excel in strength, and it is probable that in a coming scene when the obscuring medium has been removed, we shall learn with surprise how intimate their association has been with us, and how blessedly our God has ordered an unseen and unknown relationship to exist which, if known, might have diverted our thoughts from the Creator to the creature. Some of these great beings kept not their first estate, others have continued therein, and the number of these is past comprehension. There are principalities and powers and doubtless positional preferences; at least we know there is an archangel, and also there is another who has the distinguished honour of standing ever in the presence of God. All those created beings with distinct and varying capacities are

now occupied in the worship of their Creator, whom they first saw in the person of a new-born infant whom they were called upon to adore. And our God has thus become known to us, not as an invisible, intangible being, but in His short sojourn on earth could be looked upon, could be seen and handled, and in a humanity to which our affections could attach, which are desired, and which are grateful to Him. Perturbations of the planet Uranus at certain periods of its orbit led to a search for the cause, and the result was the discovery of the vast world Neptune. Heavenly citizens will doubtless realize that there are variations in the notes of praise, constantly ascending, and the obvious reason will be that there are degrees of apprehension of the glories of the Throne-Sitter, and these it will be that have led to deviating from any definite orbit, as the attracting forces of the great central glory have produced their varying effect. But great and awe-inspiring as angelic beings are, they have no inheritance; it is only the Son, the First-Born, who succeeds to all the vast domain of God's creation. It was our

Saviour's desire that His redeemed might be with Him, that they might behold His glory. This, indeed, will be a great privilege, a great honour, but there is more than this; we shall be joint heirs with Him, and for the overcomers here below there will be a place on His throne as Son of Man. O dear child of God, let us lay aside every weight, as the racers did of old in the stadium; it is well worth while. It will be inexpressible joy to have a place near Him hereafter, but it is essential in order that this may be attained, that we should well learn the wilderness lessons that the Spirit of God is teaching us as we journey on from day to day. The routine of everyday life many seem tedious and uninteresting, as indeed the pupil finds his rudimentary education to be, but the more thoroughly he is grounded in the rudiments the more enduring will be the structure that he builds thereon, and for us the more correctly we learn our lessons, and particularly in our home work, the higher will be the grade we shall enter in eternity, and, beloved saint, it is for eternity.

XV.

“Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love: In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him, and He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all He might have the pre-eminence. For it was pleasing that in Him should all fullness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven.”

In order to overcome an apparently inexplicable presentment which they think is contained in above scriptures, commentators have had recourse to the human invention of the eternal Sonship of Christ, ignoring the angelic announcement that the Saviour, Christ the Lord, was that day born in the City of David, and, furthermore, bringing in exegetical difficulties, necessitating an interpretation of other scriptures clearly incorrect.

It is said that the eighth of Proverbs is Christ, but it is merely a personification of wisdom, and what she is doing. Again, it is said that the Word, or Logos in the first chapter of John's gospel, is Christ, but it distinctly says that the Word, the Logos, is God, the God who in Genesis and here created all things, and it is this Supreme Being, who became flesh and dwelt among us, and whose glory we beheld. This also perfectly agrees with the mystery of godliness in Timothy and the statement made in Corinthians that God was in Christ. An eminent teacher, being asked how Christ became divine,

replied he could not tell, and the difficulty was caused by the assumption that the Word, the Logos of John's gospel, was Christ, thus preventing its proper interpretation. And this is not going a hair's breadth beyond scriptural unfoldings, but it surely is going beyond uninspired warnings, which would limit us to an acceptance of the Word of God as to what their exegesis would allow, although scripture tells us that the revealed things belong to us and to our children.

Turning now to the scriptures at the head of this chapter, is it not evident that there are two distinct pronouncements which no merely human explanation could possibly reconcile. We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ and the peace which has been made is by the work of the cross, but the one by whom this expiatory work was accomplished was the God who created all things; and being a spirit was bloodless. All, however, is made clear by John's gospel which so simply explains the holy union,

that we can see, and clearly, that the Man Christ Jesus was the Mediator between God and men, and that also that same human form was the embodiment of the eternal God, one phase of this incomprehensible union being more manifest than another according as the circumstances required, as evidenced in above scriptures.

Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and how blessed the fellowship; as we see from the precious scriptures how our God has been pleased to reveal to us His heart of love in His provision for the lost; and in an unfolding of the most precious mysteries concerning our beloved Saviour. Is it then a detraction of His glory to use His own words: "If thou hast seen Me thou hast seen the Father"? Is it then a detraction of His glory to assert, as scripture does, that God became man and dwelt among us? Nay, is it not immeasurably exalting Him to assert, as scripture does, that the place of subjection and obedience as Son was for time and not for eternity, either prior or subsequent to terrestrial manifestation?

The Son was born into the world at the appointed time; His generation, apart from the immaculate conception, the same as another child. He was truly man, and this in scripture is most carefully guarded, as also is His deity. The holy union is inscrutable and intended to be so; but it was not intended that scripture should be diverted from its definite application in order to bridge over apparent difficulties. Faith accepts that which is beyond human reason, and often faith is rewarded by an enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, to the great joy of the believer who could pre-trust.

In the Old Testament it is evident that the Son was not present, but that every prophecy as to Him was looking forward to His advent into the world, and all was connected with time, and not with eternity. A virgin was to bring forth a child, and that child was to be the Mighty God. All the prophetic details were fulfilled in Christ Jesus our Lord, saving of course those still future — the unfathomable mystery of the holy union, it were profanity to attempt to

elucidate; we can only bow our heads in adoration as we contemplate the grace that could communicate such amazing heavenly truths to fallible creatures.

In a coming day all things will be reconciled to Him, to whom the believer is reconciled now; not only all things on earth, but all things in heaven; meantime we wait for that we see not. We are waiting for the rapture of the saints; we are waiting to be clothed upon with our house from heaven; even then we shall be waiting for the destruction of the last enemy, death; and then a state of things will supervene wholly in consonance with the mind of God.

May we not say with another, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God"?

Whatever may have been the works of God in eternity we know not, but He has been pleased to communicate to us, in much detail, His works in the seven thousand years of time. His ways have been revealed to

His own, His acts to the unbelieving world. Whatever may have been divine operations in eternity, this we are told, and it is evidenced in a measure to our senses, that wisdom was ever with Him, whether in the creation of vast worlds, thousands of times larger than our earth, or in the infusoria about us, invisible to the naked eye. Furthermore, when in the fulness of time God was pleased to manifest Himself in human form, and when we are told for what purpose, it is evident that the great work of redemption could not, in any other way, have been accomplished.

From all eternity it was the purpose of God that a new race of beings should be created, having qualities and possibilities wholly different from any existing; and an abode for this new creation was a prime necessity. We are given to apprehend something of the wisdom displayed in this preparation as slowly, period after period, was succeeded by a higher grade until the Creator had produced a state of things which He could pronounce very good; a suitable abode for His

greatest creation, made in the image and likeness of God and destined finally to be companions of His Son in the eternal glory.

As we contemplate all the vast processes, both physical and moral, of divine actings which God has been pleased to make known to us, we are filled with the most ardent longing for a development of faculties to enable us, as enjoined, to increase in the knowledge of God. Precious, precious Saviour. come quickly!

XVI.

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

The effulgence of the glory that radiates from the great and holy One upon the throne of God is of such transcendant brightness that the mind is overwhelmed by the contemplation of what the Holy Spirit presents, as the rays are broken for us into their component colours; and of these, it may be, that the priesthood of Christ is that which pre-eminently touches the heart of the child of God. We are indeed failing and faulty children. We have inherited an evil nature, and upon

this nature the enemy of souls finds his avenue of approach in his constant and unwearied efforts to destroy us if possible. We remember those solemn words of long ago, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." It was a necessary sifting for Peter that he should be shown the folly of trusting his own heart, and another and greater, who was not characterized by the qualities so manifest in Peter was allowed to be afflicted by Satan as a preventative rather than as a corrective, but these are on record for us that we might learn in what way and for what purpose the priesthood of Christ is exercised. How blessed the answer to Paul's thrice repeated prayer, that the grace of Christ would be found sufficient, and he found it so. How often it is that the child of God is almost in despair as calamities succeed each other, often with increasing severity, until faith is well-nigh quenched and the enemy of souls uses the opportunity, which he has been allowed to create, in order to discredit God; and yet, if accepted, the

afflictions which hereafter will be viewed retrospectively, will be found to have wrought for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

How important for us; nay, how indispensable, is the priesthood of Christ. How faulty, how incoherent, are our prayers and praises, as they ascend up before God; and yet, how precious to know that our great High Priest stands ever in angelic character at the golden altar, adding thereto the fragrant incense from the golden censer in His hand. The Priesthood of Christ is typified in two characters, first as Aaronic, intercessory, and also after the order of Melchisedec, endless and unchangeable. He has been taken "from among the children of Israel." His humanity is thus presented; elsewhere as we know, in connection with the work of expiation, here with the priesthood. He was tempted by the devil and He suffered; thus He became a merciful and faithful High Priest, able to succour the tried ones, and this continues; so that we

may go boldly at all times to the throne of grace and obtain the needed mercy.

For a fuller and clearer apprehension of the priesthood of Christ it is instructive to revert to the types as given when the order was instituted; and we have also to remember that this was subsequent to all question of the purgation of sins. It may be that of the covering of the high priest, the ephod was of the first importance. What were the materials used in its facture? Gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine-twined linen. Now it is remarkable that, with the exception of gold, these are the same as in the veil, and through the rent veil, which was His flesh, we have access into the holiest; but here again, as in many other places, His deity is maintained; so that, while it was the man Christ Jesus who died upon the cross, that Man was the eternal God. How profound the mystery! And He is now exercising His office of priesthood within the holiest. This is very precious, but it is not all. Christ is ever in the presence of God for us, and as in the type, ever bearing upon

his heart the names of His beloved ones, and the breastplate upon which these names are engraven is inseparably attached to the ephod.

Is it not wonderful that He should love such fallible creatures as we are with an unchanging affection, and does not the variation presented in the precious stones indicate excellencies which His eye sees; the comeliness which he has put upon us? Nothing of this is inherent in ourselves; if there has been any service, any sacrifice, it is all through His foreordination; and what He enables the saint to accomplish, He has given the grace for, and what He has given the grace to accomplish, He has given the one so energized the credit for. Does not this call forth from the hearts of His saints unceasing praise and worship.

In addition to the urim and thummim, there was the connection, by golden chains with the shoulder-pieces of onyx, stones on which were engraven the names that were upon the breastplate; that is to say, that the

love which the precious stones on the heart bore witness of was not merely sentimental, as human affection often is, but was sustained and borne up by divine strength, giving us the assurance by type of what later we have by definite promise, that He is able to keep to the uttermost them that come to God by Him.

The robe upon which the ep'od was displayed was all of blue; the exercise of this priesthood being for us of a heavenly character, as indicated by the golden bells, the fruit of the exercise of this priesthood being apparent in the walk of the saint of God.

Our great High Priest is ordained for us, because of our weakness and infirmity. He passed through the trials incident to humanity and is thus able to succour those who trust in Him. The Succourer is Jesus the once lowly Man of Nazareth, but He is also the Son of God. But now, while this provision has been so blessedly made, the scene through which we are passing is not our rest. We have to labour in order to enter into a

future rest. Alas, many mistake the divine order, and are found sleeping among the dead, resting now, and here, instead of fighting the good fight of faith. As to this, there is not only the defensive armour, but there is also the offensive weapon, and this is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Thus it is turned inwards, for the thoughts and intents of the heart are through the suggestions of the great enemy of our souls. When our blessed Saviour was attacked by Satan, He met him by the word of God; and this is also our example, for all his efforts for our destruction are embraced in the three ways of his approach to our Lord — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; and these will be powerless with us as they were with our blessed Saviour if we rely upon the effectiveness of the sword of the spirit.

XVII.

“Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Dear child of God, does not each sentence of the above quotation send a thrill of response through every fibre of your being? How blessed the revelation to our souls that the mighty God is to us the God of peace, and this has been made possible by the work of the cross. Our Lord Jesus Christ went down under the awful burden of our sins. He died, the just for the unjust; but not only so, His death was to satisfy the holy demands of a righteous God, and as evidence of the completeness of the satisfaction, He was raised from the dead by the mighty power of

God, and this because of the blood of the everlasting covenant. How blessed to know that the covenant sealed with blood is everlasting; that our salvation does not depend upon our fulfillment of certain requirements, but it is the result of Another assuming our obligations when we were insolvent. In the past He was the Shepherd to Israel, leading them beside the still waters, and making them to lie down in pastures of tender grass; but now He is the good Shepherd giving His life for the sheep. He calls His sheep out from the Jewish fold, and He is also the way of entrance into the new and blessed relationship made by His death, a relationship unknown in the past, as eternal life is characterized by the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ the sent One. He is indeed the good Shepherd. On one occasion a man came to Him, saying, Good Master, and Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good; there is none good but one, that is God. He was Himself the living God; and this word is for the present time as well. He is not only good, but He is God. How many there are who fail to apprehend

His greatness, His majesty; nay, how few there are who do. It is, perhaps, difficult for some minds to grasp the thought presented in scripture, that the Man Christ Jesus was the eternal God; that the One who washed the feet of His apostles was the One who, upon the throne of God, is now receiving the adoration of all heavenly beings. Those mighty ones of whom we know so little, who inspire us with awe; and yet who are not partakers of the divine nature, who are not now, and never can be, one with Christ, and His companions for eternity. What a future awaits us, and what devotion should the thought of it beget in our hearts towards the blessed Saviour, who laid down His life that believers in Him might have eternal life.

He is the Chief Shepherd, and that implies under shepherds. Now, reader, are you one of those? It is a church position for which no ordination is needed; one for which the rubric does not include the qualifications, or the duties; and yet there is attached to it a reward not spoken of in connection with any other church office. Many excuse themselves

from any responsibility in the way of service for the Lord on the ground of lack of gift, but in caring for the flock of God none is needed.

A cup of cold water to a thirsty saint may seem a small service, but it has its reward. A word of consolation, of encouragement, of advice, may be a beginning, and taking oversight may follow. The weakest saint of God is dear to the Saviour, and any help given to such will never be forgotten. And what follows? A crown of glory that fadeth not away. This is in contrast with the short-lived laurel crowns of the stadium. The crown of glory is eternal. Dear child of God, do you desire a crown? Do not, I beg of you, assume that you have an inherent right to a crown, and that every saint will be crowned. God grant that you may, through grace, receive one, but if you do, doubtless you will be quite ready to acknowledge that it was not through deserving. There are but three reward crowns—the crown of life, the crown of glory, and the crown of righteousness; and the path which led to

these was of divine appointment, and the works were those which God had before ordained. There is no room for self-exaltation and pride of heart. The crown of life is doubtless for those who have attained to a fuller knowledge of the eternal life. And how has this been possible? By continual occupation with that glory which has had a transforming effect. Those who eat of the fruit of the tree of life in the paradise of God will have had a taste for it cultivated while here in the world. Israel was given the manna in the wilderness; it was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers of honey; alas, it soon ceased to be a food to be desired, then it came to be loathed; and so it is now. The world in its various forms has come into the life of the church at large, and there is little interest in that adorable One in whom all interest should centre, and the end of this downward road is a distaste for the bread of life which came down from heaven.

O beloved child of God, are you on the decline? Have you ceased to find in Him en-

during riches, and are you seeking your happiness in the perishing things of time? O turn! turn! turn! Take heed that the great enemy of souls does not rob you of your crown, which perhaps an earlier devotion would have led to the bestowal of.

There is, furthermore, the crown of righteousness, and this is reserved for those who love the thought of Christ's manifestation. And why? The judgment seat of Christ succeeds the rapture of the saints, and at that soul-searching tribunal everything in the history of every life will be laid bare, and from this exposure the unrighteous Christian shrinks. In the ordinary affairs of business, the buying and selling, many things are dismissed as being trivial, but at the judgment seat of Christ unrighteousness will not be trivial.

It is the mind of the Lord that the saint should be perfect in every good work, to do His will. An indifferent artisan is of but little value to his employer. Not much work is done, and none is well done. There is no

interest taken, and no commendation awaiting. This should not find its counterpart in divine things. Does not scripture say, "Cursed is the man that doeth the work of the Lord carelessly"; and furthermore "Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, that do with all thy might," is surely applicable to the things of God. No work can be acceptable to Him but good work, and that must be done perfectly. Now that is beyond human power, but how blessedly the scripture assures us that it is His grace working in us that enables us to do any service acceptable to Him, and yet He crowns it with His approbation.

Precious, precious Saviour: to Thee be glory for ever and ever.

O to know Thee better: to serve Thee more perfectly: to love Thee with a deeper affection: to be more confirmed to Thy moral likeness.

XVIII.

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne four and twenty thrones; and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

The desire to know what is transpiring in heaven is almost universal, and Satan takes advantage of this to mislead many, many persons, who, in the belief that they are

speaking to departed friends, are really only in communication with demons. Now in the above scriptures the Spirit of God throws wide open the door and gives us to see not only what is there, but also the occupation of those who, once citizens of earth, are now in that delightful place. First, however, our attention is called to a central throne and its occupant; His appearance and His surroundings; and as we survey all this, an unspeakable joy fills our hearts as we recognize in the Throne-Sitter our precious, our adorable Saviour. And is this glorious person the One who once sat upon the curb of the well at Sychem, which at one time long ago, Jacob gave to his son Joseph? Yes, the very same; but what a contrast. Now surrounded by royal personages, crowned and throned, but so greatly exalted beyond them that these all with one accord vacate their thrones, and casting down their crowns at His feet, proclaim His worthiness, and He is indeed God over all, blessed forever. Then a Man among men, He was hungry, and thirsty, and weary. It was noon, the heat of the day, and He was alone. There cometh one to the well, not a

royal personage, not an archangel; only a woman, a sinful, degraded woman. And was it to this end He was in this world? Yes; for the recovery of a race led captive by Satan at his will, not indeed for those who were meritorious and deserving, for there were none such; but for those who were sinners and knew themselves to be such. Truly the well was deep, and from the sinner's standpoint there was nothing to draw with; yet the mighty God was there, and He could create, in the heart of that defiled woman a fountain of living water springing up into everlasting life, and He did so.

It is very wonderful that human beings down here in the world should be permitted to see glorified persons in heaven, and to be able to anticipate a future existence for themselves, which may be made good in that sphere, if faithfulness and devotedness here have been of such character as to merit a throne and a crown; this, however, in itself would not lead to fulness of joy; that which does so is the association with the great and glorious One who occupies the central throne

and from whom radiates a glory enhanced by a rainbow like unto an emerald round about the throne.

The chapter succeeding that from which the above extract is taken presents our Lord in quite another character; still, indeed, as the Throne-Sitter, but holding in His right hand a book of judgments. God's long patience with a guilty race is at length exhausted. He is about to put in execution His righteous decrees, but where is the executor of them to be found. Worthiness is a first requirement for such an office. But there was not a worthy one in heaven or on earth. Were God's purposes, then, to be defeated? Surely not! One is at length found, a man indeed, but much more — One whose name was above every name. The wearer of many crowns; the defender of His ancient people; the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He it is who takes the book out of the hand of the Throne-Sitter. The prophet turns to see the Lion, but instead he sees a little Lamb, not the Amnos of John's gospel, but the Arnion, the diminutive. In this fig-

urative language God has been pleased to communicate to us most important truths and in a more vivid way than a plain recital would have been. The Throne-Sitter is unquestionably our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we had seen in the previous chapter. The Lion of the tribe of Judah, who is to reign before His ancients gloriously, will rend and destroy without mercy all His enemies who were in rebellion against Him, and who the coming King of kings will be, all know. There remains for consideration, in this wonderful panorama, the Lamb as it had been slain; the One whom men despised and rejected when on earth, but now the centre of all things, whether thrones or living creatures, or elders, and the embodiment of the fulness of power and of knowledge. It will be observed that the seals are not opened by the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but by the Lamb; that is to say, that this executive power and authority is the result and the consequence of the meritorious work of redemption. How wonderfully all scripture exalts and glorifies our precious Saviour, how wonderful that even those who have

been redeemed by His precious blood, are so unready to accord Him the homage which unredeemed, but holy and sinless angelic hosts, are ever acclaiming.

Returning to the original chapter, it will have been noted that there are four mysterious composite beings brought before us, of such amazing construction that it is evidently a symbolic presentation. Is it not the mind of the Spirit that we should be interested and seek to know what the symbolism is intended to convey to us? Is it not the office of the Spirit to reveal it to us. These four living creatures were full of eyes before and behind; they were thus able to take knowledge of everything that was transpiring, and being under divine guidance, every act was in accordance with the mind of God. In a past dispensation God was acting directly, on many recorded occasions, but in this period He is, for the most part, acting providentially, and thus He is using the four classes of animate creatures on the surface of the earth for the accomplishment of His great purposes; and these are not only

endowed with exterior knowledge, but they were also full of eyes within; interior intelligence. Furthermore, there was rapidity of movement, and everything done was to the glory of God. Not only is God glorified in all His works, "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork"; but He is glorified also in the worship of His creatures, and this worship radiates from those nearest the throne to the various orders of heavenly citizens, as we see here. God's providential actings are to His praise and glory incessantly, and the throned elders who are in a position to apprehend these are moved to profound adoration of Him who is seated on the throne, according to Him worthiness to receive glory and honour and power. Other voices also are heard, in number beyond computation, surrounding the throne, and more distant ones as well in heaven, on and under the earth and in the sea, and the refrain of all these was: "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

Reader, your voice in that great concert would doubtless be infinitesimal, but if you have been accorded a fitness to be there, your voice, if missing, would prevent a perfect heavenly harmony which the Saviour's ear would at once detect, but it cannot be. No human soul, cleansed by the precious blood of Christ, will be absent; and your voice, my voice, minute as they are, will help to swell that volume of praise per omnia secula seculorum.

XIX.

“And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal, . . . and the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. . . . And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it. . . . And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month. And there shall be no more curse; but the

throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads."

Scripture tells us that in His temple all things speak of His glory, but is it not the tendency in most minds of the saints, through self-occupation to consider that the blessing of the redeemed is that which is principally before the Spirit in many portions of the word where Christ Himself is the underlying burden of what is advanced. Now, reader, you have doubtless seen in this holy city a presentation of the church; its beauty, its light, and its glory; you have seen the solidity of its foundation; the brilliancy of the retaining walls; the richness of the building material, and the radiation of its inherent brightness. You have been shewn the provision made for the well-being of the saints; the river of pure water and its source, the throne of God; the heavenly food provided for the citizens in that delectable city; the monthly fruitage of the tree of life, and its perennial character. You have had

made known to you the ambient light which illuminates the vast extent of that great city, and in what manner the worship and adoration of the saints is provided for. The single street, with its transparent golden pavement, suggests the divine ground of the walk of the saints, without devious ways, without concealment. But above and beyond all, they shall see His face, His name shall be in their foreheads — and they shall serve Him.

Reader, what has the world to offer in comparison?

Some years ago, a man, whose name was known to many through his faithful and devoted service to Christ, became much engrossed in business, and as worldly prosperity increased, spiritual prosperity diminished, in a similar ratio, until his call came, and then, too late to recover a wasted past, he could only sorrowfully say that he had been gathering sticks and straws to be burned. O that men were wise, that they would consider their latter end.

Shall we now turn to another side of this picture, and endeavour to see what the Holy Spirit is bringing before us as to the glorious Person we have been heretofore occupied with.

This holy city which came down from God out of heaven had a light like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. It will be remembered that the One who sat on a central throne surrounded by the four and twenty throned elders, had the brightness of a jasper stone; thus the heavenly city was completely permeated by this glory; indeed, manifested none other; nor should the saints on earth. This indeed should be our banner as we go on from day to day: Nothing but Christ as on we tread. Now the first foundation of the city was Christ, and other foundation can no man lay. The throne of God and of the Lamb was there, and the water of life proceeded therefrom. It was out of the side of a dead Christ that the water flowed; the energy of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. This river had its beginning at the cross; it has

flowed incessantly since, and will continue to do so throughout eternity.

The tree of life is Christ, and the tree and river are inseparable. All, whosoever will, may drink of this life-giving water, and whosoever shall have drunk of it, may eat of the fruit of the tree. How blessed the provision!

“These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord of the holy prophets sent His angel to shew unto His servant the things which must shortly be done.’ The Lord God of the holy prophets is Christ Jesus, our Saviour.

“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.”

It is our adorable Saviour and Lord who is coming quickly.

“And He saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.”

In the past the word was, "Bind up the testimony"; seal not, is now the word.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

All things emanate from, and all things centre in Him; and again and again is repeated the assurance that He is coming quickly, and that coming raises and quickens the sleeping saints; it also changes the living saints to the likeness of the Lord Himself, and translates them to the abodes prepared for them in the paradise of God; and this coming is an important epoch in human affairs. All that are Christ's at His coming will be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven; the glorified bodies; but alas for those who are none of His. The door by which access into the heavenly abode has been long open will have been closed. The Master of the house will have risen up and shut to the door, and salvation for the erring children of men from a defiled earth to an undefiled inheritance in the presence of God will have ceased forever, with this limited

exception, that those who will have suffered martyrdom during the tribulation will be given a place in the glory, and accounted part of those who were Christ's at His coming.

If an unsaved soul should read these pages I implore you to consider what is involved in all this as to yourself. The loss in the exclusion from the paradise of God is beyond expression; but this might be borne if the earthly life could be perpetuated; but that cannot be; this mortal existence has its limits, and another, and completely changed scene succeeds, where there are no happy homes and no pleasant surroundings; but one monotonous, eternal state of misery and suffering with the devil and his angels, where the agony of remorse will be intensified by the weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth of those to whom the joys of heaven had been likewise presented and had been rejected.

And now, just before closing this appeal to the children of God, to enthrone the glo-

rious author of their salvation in their hearts, I would again ask you to consider the greatness, the majesty, the glory of our precious Saviour; the amazing, the incomprehensible union of God and Man in one person. The Holy Thing that was born of the Virgin was the Son of God, and He was truly man. The record of His humanity is given in the fullest detail and there is no room for the assertion that this holy humanity had a previous existence. And yet the Man Christ Jesus was the dwelling place and manifestation of the Eternal God. How far, how very far, all this is beyond the grasp of the human mind. We can only say, as scripture does, that the Man Christ Jesus was

IMMANUEL

GOD WITH US

